resolve, v.

**Pronunciation:** Brit. /riˈzɔlv/, U.S. /rəˈzɔlv/, /rɪˈzɔlv/, /rəˈzɔlv/,

/resolv/

**Forms:** ME resolu, ME–16 resolue, ME– resolve, 15 resoulve, 16 resollve, 16 resolv ...

**Etymology:** < classical Latin resolvere...

**I.** Senses relating to liquefaction, dissolution, or softening.

1. In later use only with into (cf. sense 8).

a. *trans.* To cause to melt or dissolve; to reduce from a solid to a liquid or fluid state. Now rare.

   In quot. a1398: to soften by the application of heat.

   ▸ a1398  J. TREvisa tr. Bartholomaeus Anglicus *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (BL Add.) f. 199,  A stoon resoluteþ °read resolued; L. resolutus° wiþ hete torneþ in to bras.

   ▸ c1400 (•c1380)  CHAUCER tr. Boethius *De Consol. Philos.* (BL Add. 10340) (1868) IV. met. v. l. 3814  Pe weyeþte of þe snowe yhardid by þe colde is resolued [L. solvire] by þe brennynge hete of phebus þe sonne.

   ▸ ?1440  tr. Palladius *De Re Rustica* (Duke Humfrey) (1896) XII. 526 (MED),  For brousty oil, whit wex is to resolue In fynest oil, and theryn throwe hit so.

   1530  J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 688/1  This metall can nat be resolved without a marvayllous sharpe fyre.

   1555  R. EDEN tr. Peter Martyr of Angleria *Decades of Newe Worlde* III. i. f. 93",  Cleopatra..resolued a pearle in vineger and drunke it.

   1609  P. HOLLAND tr. A. Marcellinus *Rom. Hist.* 117  Euphrates was risen by reason of snow newly thawed and resolved.

   1678  DRYDEN *All for Love* III. 32  He could resolve his mind, as Fire does Wax, From that hard rugged Image, melt him down [etc.].

   1732  J. ARBUTHNOT *Pract. Rules of Diet* i. 270  Soaps which resolve solid Substances.

   1735  T. DALLOWE tr. H. Boerhaave *Elements Chem.* I. II. 240  Let it [sc. the white of an egg] be exposed to 92 degrees of Heat..and it will in a little time be resolved into a Liquid, that grows continually thinner and thinner.

   1834  P. M. ROGET *Animal & Veg. Physiol.* I. 97  A soft and transparent jelly, which by spontaneous decomposition after death..is resolved almost wholly into a limpid watery fluid.

   1905  *Atlantic Monthly* Nov. 656/2  There it [sc. ice] will remain..until the warm sun of spring shall resolve it into water again.


   ▸ b. *trans.* To condense (a vapour or mist) to a liquid. Also *fig.* *Obs.*
resolve, v. : Oxford English Dictionary

c. intr. To melt; to dissolve; to become liquid. Also fig. Now rare.

d. trans. (refl.) = sense 1c. Now rare.
1868 Sir J. Herschel in *People's Mag.* Jan. 63 Its pileus...has the singular property of resolving itself...into a black liquid.

1954 A. Moorehead *Summer Night* iii. 61 Inside the press the grapes were bursting under their own weight, resolving themselves into a dark liquid pulp.

†2. *trans.* To soften (lit. and fig.); to cause to become slack or limp; to weaken. Also (occas.) *intr.* with object implied. *Obs.*

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<td>J. Trevisa</td>
<td>Bartholomaeus Anglicus <em>De Proprietatibus Rerum</em> (BL Add. 27944) (1975) I. x. vii. 563</td>
<td></td>
<td>By his sharpnesse cool sowdiþ iren and resoluyth and slakeþ þe parties þerof and makeþ it neissche.</td>
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<td>1451</td>
<td>J. Capgrave</td>
<td><em>Life St. Gilbert</em> 100 (MED)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Þe grete constriccion of hir wombe was resolued meruoulesly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1484</td>
<td>Caxton</td>
<td><em>Substyl Historyes &amp; Fables Esope</em> f. iij</td>
<td></td>
<td>By cause the water was hote and their stomake [was] resoluted by the water.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1541</td>
<td>T. Elyot</td>
<td><em>Image of Gouernance</em> x. f. 18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Like as by the other the strength of body is resolued.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1577</td>
<td>H. Rhodes</td>
<td><em>Bk. Nurture</em> (new ed.) sig. Eiii</td>
<td></td>
<td>It is a very hard work of continence, to repell the paynting glose of flatterings whose words resolute the hart with plesure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1588</td>
<td>T. Kyd</td>
<td><em>Tasso Housholders Philos.</em> f. 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>The night...[in which] we may sufficiently restore our bodies resoluted with exceeding heate and contagions of the day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1644</td>
<td>J. Bulwer</td>
<td><em>Chirologia</em> 35</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Hand collected, the Fingers looking downewards, then turned and resolued.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1715</td>
<td>N. Rowe</td>
<td><em>Lady Jane Gray</em> II</td>
<td></td>
<td>Every moving accent that she breathes Resolves my courage, slackens my tough nerves.</td>
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†a. *trans.* To disperse or dissolve (humours, morbid material, etc.); to soften (an accumulation of hardened material). Also *intr.:* to perform or undergo such a process. *Obs.*

In later use there is some overlap with sense 3c.

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<td></td>
<td>In wynter humours ben sadde yfastned togidres by colde...And perfore fewe fumositees ben resoluted in þat tyme for passyng colde þat fastnþe þe humours in þe body.</td>
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<td>?1425</td>
<td>MS Hunterian 95 f. 105v (MED)</td>
<td>Ane harde enpostume is cured wiþ resolutiues &amp; mollificatiues, so þat o tyme þu schalt resolue &amp; anoþer tyme mollifie.</td>
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<td>1500</td>
<td>Lanfranc</td>
<td><em>Sci. Cirurgie</em> (Wellcome) f. 23 (MED)</td>
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<td>If þe mater..is gret..resolu it with a light resolutiue.</td>
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When ecchymosis is all digested & resoluted, than it is parmytted to drye the broken fleshe.

Oyl that is made of vnriple oluiues..doth myghtely resolue.

If the tumor doe by these meanes resolue and vanish, pursue it with a cataplasme.

Those plasters which resolue or maturat any impostumed place.

It burneth, draweth, and resolueth, and is goode for scurfe.

For it resolves all hard humors.

Green Tea..Resolves, and Attenuates.

The inguinal Tumour entirely resolving, and the Pustules every where dying away and falling off.

Embrcations are of Use in resolving Obstructiuns.

Friction during the paroxysm..contributed much to resolve the remains of the swelling.

Oyle of Rue is hot, resolving pain.

Fire..hath not onely heat resolving numbnesse,..but it hath light.

The Drying caused by Cold, is but weak, and easily resolved.

It helpeth digestion and resolveth pain throughout the body, in what part soever they shall come, especially, when they have their beginning of cold.

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d. intr. Of a disease, pathological process, etc.: to undergo resolution (RESOLUTION n. 2c).

1793 W. ROWLEY *Rational Pract. Physic* III. 13 Its cure should be attempted by a mode similar to the foregoing, by which the tumor often resolves.

1822 J. M. GOOD *Study Med.* II. 505 Regular fit of gout..gradually resolving, and leaving the constitution in its usual or improved health.

1898 P. MANSON *Trop. Dis.* xxvii. 434 These drugs have undoubtedly the power of causing the eruption in yaws to resolve.

1933 *Jrnl. Hygiene* 33 283/1 Eustachian drainage is quickly re-established, allowing middle ear inflammation to resolve.

2001 *Cats* Aug. 9/1 Another possibility is cholangiohepatitis... It often never completely resolves, and tends to flare up from time to time.

†4. intr. With of, from. To flow out, issue. Obs. rare.


1601 P. HOLLAND tr. Pliny *Hist. World* I. XII. xvi. 369 Little peeces..yeeld a certaine whitish liquor which issueth and resolveth from them.

†5. trans. With in, into, to. To cause to lapse into or be given over to a particular emotional state or mode of behaviour. Usu. in pass. Obs.

When used in relation to tears (of grief, etc.) often as part of an extended metaphor, and as such closer in meaning to sense 1; cf. *Dissolve* v. 3.

•a1438 Bk. Margery Kempe I. 153 (MED), Sche was resoluyd in-to terys of pyte & compassyon.

c1460 Tree & 12 Frutes (McClen) (1960) 15 (MED), Ofte tymes after mete many ben resoluid to lightnes and in to vnreligious myrthes.

1533 T. ELYOT *Pasquil the Playne* f. 7, Where thou seest thy lorde or mayster in the presence of many, resolued in to fury or wantonnesse.

1611 B. JONSON *Catiline* III. i. 609 Each house [being] Resolu'd in freedome.

1631 R. BOLTON *Instr. Right Conf. Afl. Consciences* 260 The Alien..is by the heate of his slavish honour, rather enragd with malice, then resolved into mercy.

1679 J. GOODMAN *Penitent Pardoned* II. i. 157 Such reflections and considerations as these break the very heart of a sinner, and resolve him into sighs and tears.

†6. trans. To cause (conflict) to cease. Obs.

a1530 W. BONDE *Pylgrimage of Perfection* (1531) III. f. CClxxxii, It resolueyth discorde, reconsyleth ennemyes, & maketh them frendes.
7. trans. Chiefly Sc. Law. To annul (a law, contract, etc.). Also intr.: (of a contract of sale) to become void. Now rare.

1537 in State Papers Henry VIII (1849) VII. 706 The act made for money by exchange, the wiche...onles it be resolvid, wilbe a great ocacion...to causse a stey for salis of wolen clothis.

a1768 J. ERKINE Inst. Law Scotl. (1773) II. iii. 449 If he fail to pay the price within the time limited, the sale resolves, and the property returns from him to the seller.

1771 in M. P. Brown Decisions Lords of Council & Session 1766–91 (1826) I. 435, I do not see a substantial difference between the contract before and after the tailyie: all the parties concerned may still agree to resolve the contract and tailyie.

1838 W. BELL Dict. Law Scotl. 859 Resolutive Condition, a condition in a sale, which does not suspend the completion of the contract; but which resolves the sale, if the condition be purified at the time specified.

1978 Internat. & Compar. Law Q. 27 277 The far more usual practice [in Roman law] was for the contract of sale to fix the latest date by which the price should be paid and empower the seller to resolve the contract if it was not paid by then.

II. Senses relating to splitting, breaking up, or transformation.

8. a.

(a) trans. To break up or separate (a material thing) into constituent parts or elements; to disintegrate (something); (also) to cause (a body, earth, etc.) to decompose. Freq. (now usu.) with into (formerly also †to).

* a1398 J. TREVIS A tr. Bartholomaeus Anglicus De Proprietatibus Rerum (BL Add. 27944) (1975) I. vii. xxxvi. 384 Whanne þicke mater and gret and glemy so ioyned in þe body meoviþ by hete, hit nediþ þat it be resolved...into vapour.

?1400 (•c1380) CHAUCER tr. Boethius De Consol. Philos. (BL Add. 10340) (1868) II. pr. vii. l. 1600 What atteineiþ fame to swiche folk whan þe body is resoluted by þe deþ atte þe last[e].

a1450 ST. KATHERINE (Richardson 44) (1884) 52 (MED), Dou haue power for a tyme to vse þy cruelte vppon my body, whyche...abydeth to be resoluynge in to deþ.

a1500 (•c1477) T. NORTON Ordinal of Alchemy (BL Add.) (1975) 2296 (MED), Liquours departith qualitees a-sondyre, Substance resoluynge in attoms with wondire.

1533 J. BELLENDEN tr. Livy Hist. Rome (1901) I. i. xv. 85 Becaus þe stoupis and pillaris þareof war all of tre, they war haistelie brynt and resoluit in powder.

1577 B. GOOGE tr. C. Heresbach Foure Bks. Husbandry i. f. 17", A mellowe ground that is fatte, and wyll soone be resoluted.

1579 T. LUPTON Thousand Notable Things ii. 27 A flynt stone lying in Vineger the space of seuen dayes: maye be resoluted into powder by rubbинг betweene the fyngers.

1620 T. VENNER Via Recta iii. 52 They will too soon resolue the iuyce of lighter meats.

1633 BP. J. HALL Plaine Explic. Hard Texts i. 321 O ye my faithfull ones, who are now resolved to the very dust of the earth.

1667 T. VINCENT Christ's Certain Appearance to Judgment iv. 17 The flesh is consumed, and resolved into its first elements.
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1727 P. SHAW & E. CHAMBERS tr. H. Boerhaave New Method Chem. 177/1 The common doctrine..., that the different substances into which mix’d bodies are commonly resolved by fire, are not of pure and elementary nature.

1776 T. BOWDEN Farmer’s Director 18 By the assistance of alternate rain and drought, to resolve and break the hard clods.

1838 T. THOMSON Chem. Org. Bodies 54 When malic acid is distilled at the temperature of 349°, it is resolved into water, and two pyro-acids, which are isomeric.

1891 Spectator 4 July 5/2 A..campaign intended to break up Italy, or to resolve the German Empire back again into its elements.

1905 D. J. DAVIES & L. H. MATES Encycl. Cremation 327/2 The cremationists..argued..that cremation merely resolved the body into its constituent elements.

(b) intr. Usu. with into (formerly also †to). Of a material thing: to undergo dissolution or separation into constituent parts or elements, or into a more basic or fundamental state; to decompose; to disintegrate. Also fig.
mature fruits resolves into thin strands which look like spaghetti.

(c) *trans.* (refl.) in same sense. Now rare.

1812 *Q. Rev.* Sept. 30 The whole fabric [of the ship] resolves itself into its constituent parts, scarcely any two of them remaining in adhesion.

1851 W. B. Carpenter *Man. Physiol.* (ed. 2) 487 The first change...in the Mammalian ovum, is the ‘segmentation’ of the yolk; the entire mass of which...resolves itself...into...segments.

1905 *Bot. Gaz.* 40 88 This vesicle...resolves itself into fibers.

1937 C. D. Darlington *Rec. Adv. in Cytol.* (ed. 2) i. 22 The characteristic process of mitosis in the course of which the whole nucleus, apart from the nucleoli, resolves itself into longitudinally split threads, the chromosomes.

†b. *trans.* To produce (a substance) by disintegration or decomposition; esp. to cause (smoke or vapour) to be given off from something. *Obs.*


*c1425* tr. J. Arderne *Treat. Fistula* (Sloane 6) 59 (*MED*), Of rawnes of digestion is þe vryne discolored, And it appereþ with poudry resolucions which bene resoluted of malencolious blode.

*a1475* in *Neuphilol. Mitteilungen* (1957) 58 61 (*MED*), The son and other sterrys, sendyng ther beemys unto the erthe and water, resolvethe of and pulleþe fro the erthe diverse vapores.

*a1500* (*c1477*) T. Norton *Ordinal of Alchemy* (BL Add.) (1975) l. 1973 (*MED*), Odour is a smokish vapour resoluyd with hete Owte of a substance bi a Invisible swete.


a.

(a) To reduce (a subject, statement, phenomenon, etc.) by analysis into more elementary forms, principles, etc.; to consider or demonstrate (something) to be divisible or analysable into. Formerly also with †in.
simple obedience and submission to it.

1719  D. DEFOE  *Life Robinson Crusoe* 237  After I had entertain'd these Notions, and by long musing, had as it were resolved them all into nothing.

1774  T. PENNANT  *Tour Scotl.* 1772  233,  I was for resolving this phænomenon into Ship-wrecks.

1841–8  F. MYERS  *Catholic Thoughts* II. IV. §2. 184,  Why may we not..resolve Christianity into a system of practical Morality?

1871  B. JOWETT  in tr.  *Plato Dialogues* III. 335  All sensation is to be resolved into a similar combination of an agent and patient.

1814  T. CHALMERS  *Evid. Christian Revel.* ii. 46  The argument..resolves itself into four parts.

1879  J. LUBBOCK  *Addr. Polit. & Educ.* iii. 44  His complaint resolves itself into two parts.

1916  J. E. BOODIN  *Realistic Universe* ii. 20  We cannot resolve reality, whether conscious or unconscious, into bundles of perception, or into experience of any form, altogether.

1958  J. S. HINES  tr. A. Mathiot  *Brit. Polit. Syst.* 1. ii. 88  Such an issue can be resolved into a simple choice between two parties.

2003  *Jrnl. Paleontol.* 77 1088/1  The distribution of living corbulid genera can be resolved into three broad biogeographic regions.

(b) *refl.* Of a subject, statement, etc.: to be susceptible of such reduction or analysis.

1739  D. HUME  *Treat. Human Nature* I. 1. 11  All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call Impressions and Ideas.

1879  J. LUBBOCK  *Addr. Polit. & Educ.* iii. 44  His complaint resolves itself into two parts.

1873  *Amer. Educ. Monthly* May 193  This day.., if resolved into minutes, and divided by 365, will give the four minutes difference between solar and sidereal time.

1904  *Athenæum* 9 Apr. 464/3,  I find..upon making a careful stichometrical analysis of the Libellus, that it resolves itself into thirty-eight sections.

1803  R. CHAMBERS  *Treat. Estates & Tenures* (1824) vi. 189  The reliefs in earlier times..were paid in horses, and arms, and habiliments of war: but these, like other things, were in time resolved into money.

2001  D. KEPPEL-JONES  *Strict Metrical Trad.* 26  Rhythm tends to resolve itself into three aspects.

b. To reduce or convert (a quantity) into specified units. Now *rare.*


1669  S. STURMY  *Mariners Mag.* II. vi. 66  The Degrees resolved into Hours and Minutes, is 1 Hour 49 Min.

a1687  W. PETTY  *Polit. Anat. Ireland* (1691) 352  The victuals.., resolved into money, may be estimated 3s. 6d. per week.

a1803  R. CHAMBERS  *Treat. Estates & Tenures* (1824) vi. 189  The reliefs in earlier times..were paid in horses, and arms, and habiliments of war: but these, like other things, were in time resolved into money.

1873  *Amer. Educ. Monthly* May 193  This day.., if resolved into minutes, and divided by 365, will give the four minutes difference between solar and sidereal time.

1904  *Strand Mag.* Oct. 440/1  Eighteen thousand francs is not a large sum when resolved into pounds, shillings, and pence.

1938  *Navy Dept. Appropriation Bill: Hearings before House Appropriations Comm.* (75th U.S. Congr., 3rd Sess.) 207,  I should like to have that resolved into dollars and cents... The cost..is $1,713.88.
†c. To analyse, examine (a statement). *Obs. rare.*

1593 R. Hooker *Of Laws Eccl. Politie* ii. vii. 120 Examine, sift, and resolue their alleaged proofes, till you come to the very roote..whence they springe.

1599 tr. A. Munday *Treat. Virtue of Crosse* sig. C4, These matters first heere noted, haue vrged vs to resolue such allegations, as are contayned in the first placard.

10.
a.

(a) *trans.* To convert, transform, alter, render (a material or immaterial thing) into some other thing or form. Formerly also with †*to.* Also *fig.*

*a*1450 (*a*1397) Prol. Old Test. in Bible (Wycliffe, L.V.) (Cambr. Mm. II. 15) (1850) xv. 57 A participle of a present tens..mai be resoluid into a verbe of the same tens, and a coniunctioun copulatif, as thus..*seiyng, mai be resoluid thus, and *seith, eithir that *seith.

*a*1538 T. Starkey *Dial. Pole & Lupset* (1989) 11 Yf ther be any eyvyle law ordemonyd wych can not be resolvyd therto, hyt ys of no value.

1565 N. Sanders *Supper of Our Lord* iv. f. 196, The cause why the verb *est* should be resoluid into the verb *significat*, must nedes come from the word *corpus* body.

1591 R. Wilmot *Tancred & Gismund* ii. iii. sig. C2, A resolution that resolues my bloud Into the Ice-sie drops of Lethes flood.

*a*1616 Shakespeare *Timon of Athens* (1623) iv. iii. 441 The Seas a Theefe, whose liquid Surge, resolues The Moone into Salt teares.

*a*1623 H. Swinburne *Treat. Spousals* (1686) 27 By the same means..are those Spousals by them contracted in their Minority..resolved or turned into Matrimony.

1674 R. Baxter *Full & Easie Satisfaction* iv. vii. 127 All their faith of this [sc. the doctrine of transubstantiation] is by them resolved into a phanatick pretence of Inspiration.

1743 M. Tomlinson *Protest. Birthright* 13 Into whose Authority all Christians have resolved their Faith and Obedience.

1750 J. Campbell *Present State Europe* x. 281 A very large Proportion of the Debt was, if not paid, at least resolved into Waste Paper.

1861 Dickens *Great Expectations* III. v. 84 The spectral figure..seemed all resolved into a ghastly stare.

1875 E. C. Stedman *Victorian Poets* 387 The succeeding chorus..resolves attention to enchantment.

1889 *Standard* 9 Apr., Emin..has seen islands resolved into headlands.

1933 *Mod. Psychologist* Nov. 247 Old mind-sets have to be resolved into a hospitable flexibility in order that new attitudes and expectancies may be formed.

1951 A. Schwarzschild tr. R. Luxemburg *Accumulation of Capital* ii. 55 Referring each private capital unit to its place of production in order to resolve it into a mere product of labour.

2007 D. Clarke in P. Cheney *Cambr. Compan. Shakespeare's Poetry* x. 193 Her suffering has been resolved into narrative, as she retells her rape.

(b) *intr.* With *into* or (now less commonly) *to.* Of an immaterial thing: to
change or be transformed into some other form or state; esp. to be susceptible of being interpreted as some other thing. Formerly also with \textit{in}.

1598 R. BARCKLEY \textit{Disc. Felicitie of Man} v. 393 It resolveth into this inconvenience, that the covetousnes of one wicked man is satisfied by the prejudice of a whole nation.

1647 BP. J. TAYLOR \textit{Θεολογία Εκλεκτική} II. 30 The whole businesse of submitting our understanding to humane authority, comes to nothing; for either it resolves into the direct duty of submitting to God, or if it be spoken of abstractedly, it is no duty at all.

1679 DRYDEN \textit{Troilus & Cressida} i. i. 2 Then every thing resolves to brutal force And headlong force is led by hoodwink'd will.

1711 LD. SHAFTESBURY \textit{Characteristicks} (1737) II. III. i. 345, I..celebrate the Beautys which resolve in Thee, the Source.of all Perfection.

1752 D. HUME \textit{Balance of Trade in Ess.} (1817) I. 315 These cases, when examined, will be found to resolve into our general theory.

1819 SCOTT \textit{Bride of Lammermoor} ii, in \textit{Tales of my Landlord} 3rd Ser. II. 32 It would resolve into an equitable claim.

1877 G. MEREDITH in \textit{New Q. Mag.} Apr. 20 The Comedy might be performed by a troop of the corps de ballet; and in the recollection of the reading it resolves to an animated shuffle of feet.

1955 R. GRAVES \textit{Crowning Privilege} 227 Each scowl resolves into a leer.


(c) \textit{trans. (refl.)} in same sense.


1856 C. J. LEVER \textit{Martins of Cro' Martin} xxiii, All resolves itself to some question of a harm to one side.

1920 W. T. TILDEN \textit{Art of Lawn Tennis} 67 Match play..resolves itself into a battle of wits and nerve.

1928 \textit{Amer. Mercury} Oct. 180/1 Consequently, between the violent outrushing of the Holy Spirit and the bad acoustics, the service is apt to resolve itself into one vast gr-r-r-r-r.

1976 \textit{Times} 26 Jan. 6/7 It was a pity that a match which reached such a high pitch of excitement should have resolved itself into a trial by ordeal.

2000 M. RICKARDS \textit{Encycl. Ephemera} (2001) 244/1 In many cases the matter resolved itself into a dispute between one parish and another.

b. \textit{trans. (refl.)}. Of a deliberative body, meeting, etc.: to convert itself \textit{into} a committee for some particular purpose. Also in pass. and intr. in same sense.

1641 S. D’EWES \textit{Speech Commons, July 7th} (title-page), Being resolved into a committee, (so neer as it could be collected together) in the Palatine cause.

1654 T. FULLER \textit{Ephemeris Parliamentaria} 240 Let us be resolved into a Committee, and presently fall
to debate thereof.

1659  S. BUTLER Acts & Monuments Late Parl. 5  Thereupon the house resolved into a grand Committee to debate the proportioning of the said lands to the particular members.


1713  Scots Mag. Aug. 388/2  The house having resolved itself into a committee of the whole house upon the..bill.

1828  tr. A.-J.-M.-R. Savary Mem. I. II. v. 43  The commission resolved itself into a council to deliberate.

1885  Manch. Examiner 7 Oct. 5/3  The meeting unanimously resolved itself into a committee.

1902  Jnl. Polit. Econ. 10  414  A formal motion to the effect that on a certain day the house will resolve itself into a committee to consider the supply to be granted to His Majesty.

1977  S. Central Bull. 37 12/1  Professor Werbow moved that the executive committee resolve into a committee of the whole to discuss a matter of general welfare.

1995  Sunday Mail (Queensland) (Nexis) 24 Sept.,  The use of a council local law on meeting procedure might allow it to resolve itself into a committee to allow the consideration of a secret ballot.

11.

**a. trans. and intr. Math.** To analyse (a force or other vector quantity) into two or more components acting in different directions but collectively having the same effect as the original vector. Cf. **RESOLUTION n.**

1719  G. GORDON Remarks Newtonian Philos. 13  All that can here be inferred is, that the actual Motion of the Body in the Line bc, may be resolved into the Forces bf and bg; but then it may as well be resolved into bf, bo and br.

1781  Philos. Trans. 1780 (Royal Soc.) 70 559  Let FD..represent the force communicating the motion at the point D, which resolve into two others.

1806  O. G. GREGORY Treat. Mech. I. i. ii. 24  Resolve each of the forces into components respectively parallel to these co-ordinates.

1852  J. B. PHEAR Elem. Hydrostatics v. 89  Hence, resolving along cO and in a plane perpendicular to it, we have [etc.].

1909  W. H. P. CREIGHTON Steam-engine & Other Heat-motors (ed. 2) xv. 452  Resolve these velocities along the line of motion of the bucket.

1948  Sci. News 7 23  In aerodynamics it is customary to resolve the reaction of the air on a surface into two components, namely lift..and drag.


2005  B. J. NELSON et al. in P. Dario & R. Chatila Robotics Res. III. 120  Capacitors are orthogonally configured to make the force sensor capable of resolving forces in both the x and y directions.

**b. trans. Science.** To analyse (a phenomenon, esp. a wave motion) into components which when added together give that phenomenon. Cf. **Fourier analysis** at **FOURIER n.**

1873  Med. Times & Gaz. 4 Oct. 396/1  This wave the ear can resolve into its component parts.
1894 *Proc. Physical Soc.* 13 94 It was most useful to resolve the motion into its fundamental harmonic motions and its overtones.

1936 R. S. GLASGOW *Princ. Radio Engin.* i. 22 The flat-topped wave of Fig. 16a and the peaked wave of Fig. 16b may be resolved into a fundamental and third harmonic.

1965 *Math. in Biol. & Med.* (Med. Res. Council) i. 38 Figure 3 shows how an analogue computer is used to resolve such a curve into its components.

2005 *Proc. National Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 102 13928/1 To resolve the early phases of the isotonic velocity transient, the acquisition rate was 200 kHz.

12. **Music.**

a. *trans.* To alter or transform (a discord, or relatively dissonant harmony) so as to form a concord, or relatively more consonant harmony. Cf. RESOLUTION n.1 9b.

1728 E. CHAMBERS *Cycl.* at *Discord*, The Discord is resolved by being immediately succeeded by a Concord.

1797 *Encycl. Brit.* XVI. 125/1 There is no possible manner of resolving a dissonance which is not derived from an operation of cadence.

1838 *Penny Cycl.* XII. 50/1 Most discords require to be prepared, and all must be resolved.

1868 F. A. G. OUSELEY *Harmony* (1875) ii. 20 When the discords have thus been rendered agreeable to the ear, they are said to be resolved.

1924 *Musical Times* Feb. 132/2 If we resolve the dominant chord at the double-bar on page 5, it makes a complete movement in itself.

2003 L. BLACK *Franz Schubert* 31 The root of the dominant-seventh chord is not actually heard in the crucial chord, though it is there again in the upper part immediately the dissonance is resolved.

b. *intr.* Of a discord or relatively dissonant harmony: to undergo such a transformation. Of a note: to effect such a transformation by passing to another note. Freq. with on to or upon.

1825 J. F. DANNELEY *Encycl. Music*, The seventh and ninth are dissonant, and therefore resolve or descend one degree.

1878 *Johnson's New Universal Cycl.* III. 683/1 A seventh, instead of resolving into the perfect triad, may be succeeded by another seventh.

1889 E. PROUT *Harmony* xiv. §332 All chords of the ninth can resolve upon their own generator.

1942 *Music & Lett.* 23 20 In the middle parts there is an F persisting which only resolves on to E♭ on the final two notes.

1989 P. VAN DER MERWE *Origins Pop. Style* (1992) xx. 173 Typically these blue sevenths fall to the dominant, resolving onto the dominant in much the same way as the blue third resolves onto the tonic.

2006 *Daily Tel.* (Nexis) 17 June 4 Basically, Wagner sounds a chord at the beginning and it never resolves until the very end.

13.
a. trans. Science. Originally: (of optical instruments or persons using them) to reveal or perceive (a nebula) as a cluster of distinct stars. Later more widely: to distinguish parts or components of (something) that are close together in space or time; to identify or distinguish individually (peaks in a graph, lines in a spectrum, etc.). Cf. RESOLUTION n. 6.

1785 *Philos. Trans.* (Royal Soc.) 75 219 When he resolves one nebula into stars, he discovers ten new ones which he cannot resolve.

1833 *London & Edinb. Philos. Mag.* 2 338 These small brown moths possess very delicate and unique scales, requiring some tact in the management of the illumination, to resolve their lines distinctly.

1868 J. N. Lockyer *Elem. Lessons Astron.* §77 Star-clusters...so distant that even in telescopes of great power they could not be resolved.

1932 *Proc. Royal Soc.* A. 136 313 Two particles separated by as little as 1/500th second could be ‘resolved’ and correctly recorded.

1962 H. D. Bush *Atomic & Nucl. Physics* iii. 58 If the fine structure is examined with the aid of very high resolution instruments, each component of the fine structure is resolved into further components.

2001 N. J. Lane in R. Catlow & S. Greenfield *Cosmic Rays* 73 The light microscope was unable to resolve detail much below 0.2μm.

b. intr. and trans. (refl.). With into. Of an object initially perceived indistinctly: to become identifiable, esp. as a number of discrete objects, when seen more clearly. Also in extended use.

1825 R. Taylor *Key to Knowl. Nature* iv. 78 Many of the stars which appear single to the naked eye, on the application of the telescope, resolve themselves into two or more.

1853 L. Sunderland *Bk. Human Nature* 42 Were we to look at our solar system from myriad millions of miles, it would appear to us a conglobated or solid mass... But when we near it, it resolves into planets and satellites.

1890 K. Munroe *Under Orders* v. 67 As he rounded a corner this noise resolved itself into the shouts, cheers, and yells of an angry mob.

1897 *Yale Literary Mag.* Oct. 35 It resolved into a black speck and a white one.

1921 *National Geographic Mag.* Mar. 269/1 A minute object that separated into two as we drew nearer, and finally resolved itself into a pair of vessels linked together with a tow-line.

1985 *Pop. Sci.* Feb. 70/1 As the distance closes, the pod resolves into a trio of connected cylinders, each larger than a tour bus.

1992 F. Kemiske *Lifetime Employym.* xii. 161 The faint cracking sound resolved itself into the din of a half dozen different kinds of firearm being discharged repeatedly.

2002 A. Proulx *That Old Ace in Hole* (2003) i. 3 There appeared, far ahead..a wambling black dot that resolved into a bicyclist.

14. trans. Chem. To separate (a racemic compound or mixture) into
optical isomers.

1899 J. McCRAE tr. H. Landolt Optical Activity & Chem. Composition 90 Fermentation lactic acid in the form of its zinc ammonium salt has been resolved [Ger. zerfällt] by crystallisation into the d- and l-lactates.

1919 S. W. COLE Pract. Physiol. Chem. (ed. 5) v. 151 Equal parts of the d- and l- varieties are formed. These can often be resolved into their active constituents.

1983 R. O. C. NORMAN & D. J. WADDINGTON Mod. Org. Chem. (ed. 4) xv. 245 Racemic mixtures which are not acids or bases can often be resolved by first making them into derivatives with acid groups.

2001 J. S. VARCOE Clin. Biochem. xi. 16 Chiral additives can be included in the buffer to resolve stereo isomers.

15. trans. Computing. To translate (a readable, alphanumeric domain name) into a numerical IP address, typically by means of the domain name system. Also: to identify (the IP address) of a particular domain name. Cf. RESOLVER n. 5.

1983 P. MOCKAPETRIS Request for Comments (Network Working Group) (Electronic text) No. 882. 15 These name servers must resolve names for at least all the hosts in the domain.

1993 InfoWorld (Nexis) 25 Oct. 65 We noticed we were unable to use our host's file to resolve IP addresses. Another call to technical support.

2003 B. KOMAR et al. Firewalls for Dummies (ed. 2) x. 175 Type the Web site name in the address bar of the Web browser. This name is resolved to the IP address of the Web site with the help of DNS servers.

III. To untie; to answer, solve; to decide, determine.

16. trans. To untie, unbind, loosen; to release (something) from its bonds (lit. and fig.); (perh.) to disentangle.

In later use only in figurative contexts with reference to knots.


c1450 (●1410) J. WALTON tr. Boethius De Consol. Philos. (Linc. Cathedral 103) 204 (MED), Youre resouns weyuen [y]e so wondirl In maner like þe hous of Dydalus Full hard for to resoluen and vnplye [L. inextricabilem labynrum rationibus texens].

?1518 A. BARCLAY tr. D. Mancinus Myrrour Good Maners sig. B.iv⁷, Thy wyttes to apply To resolue or argue: with wordes superflue The knottes intricaye, of bablynge sophistry.

1558 T. PHAER tr. Virgil Seuen First Bks. Eneidos VII. 155 Resolue [L. solvite] your heades attyre, & celebrate this daunce with me.

1591 H. SMITH Treat. Lords Supper 1. 26 Resolue this knot & al is cleere.
resolve, v. : Oxford English Dictionary

1610 *Bible* (Douay) II. Dan. v. 16 Thou canst interpret obscure thinges, and resolue [L. *dissolvere*] thinges bound.

1637 B. Jonson *Magnetick Lady* iv. viii. 51 in Wks. (1640) III, What deserves he In your opinion, Madam..can resolve the knot?

1776 J. Berington *Lettr. Materialism* ii. 30 He..resolves the knot, by asking another question.

1844 *N. Brit. Rev.* May 132 A true philosophy..resolves the knot when it is most perplexed.

1881 T. Woolner *Pygmalion* vi. 89 You..Tend to resolve all tangles by the stroke Of steel.

1936 E. Fitzgerald tr. F. Mehring *Karl Marx* iii. 65 In the one case it is a question of resolving the knot, and in the other one of first tying it.

2005 *Windsor* (Ont.) *Star* (Nexis) 29 Dec. B4 Perhaps he can unravel and resolve some of the emotional knots that leave him so tied up that he cannot be successful.

17. *trans.*

(a) To answer (a question); to solve (a problem of any kind); to determine, settle, or decide upon (a point or matter regarding which there is doubt or dispute). Formerly also: †to make an effective response to (a proposition, argument, etc.) (obs.). Also refl.

Sometimes with indirect question as object.

• a1438 Bk. Margery Kempe i. 35 (MED), Þe clerkys askyd þis creatur many hard qwestyons, Þe wych sche be Þe grace of Ihesu resoluyd, so þat hir answerys lykyd Þe Bysshop ryght wel.

• c1454 R. Pecock *Foleuer to Donet* 34 Bilke persoones whiche ben so lowe and symple in witt, leernyng, and kunnyng þat þei not sufficen to resolue and brynge maters of philosophie in to her groundis of resoun.

1550 T. Cranmer *Def. Sacrament* iv. f. 94, S. Augustine, most plainly resolueth this matter in his booke., disputing against two kinds of heretiques.

1577 tr. St. Augustine in H. I. tr. H. Bullinger *50 Godlie Serm.* II. iii. ix. sig. Oo,j/1, Mee thinketh therefore that this question can bee none otherwise resolued.

1581 J. Bell tr. W. Haddon & J. Foxe *Against Jerome Osorius* 212 Least he exclayme agayne that his argumentes are not throughly resolved, I will answere in few wordes.

1612 T. Taylor *Ἀρξήν Ἀράντων: Comm. Epist. Paul to Titus* (i. 9) 29 Resolving all doubtful cases.

1647 J. Sprigge *Anglia Rediviva* (1854) ii. i. 72 This resolved the question at the council of war without putting it.

1661 J. Davies tr. D. Blondel *Treat. Sibyls* ii. xi. 110 Does the Flaming Sword keep the entrance of Paradise against the Saints? But the Question resolves it self.

1704 *Swift Disc. Mech. Operat. Spirit* i, in *Tale of Tub* 284, I have been perplexed for some time, to resolve what would be the most proper Form to send it abroad in.

1749 H. Fielding *Tom Jones* ii. iv. xii. 87 Whether Mrs. Honour really deserved that Suspicion..is a Matter which we cannot indulge the Reader's Curiosity by resolving.

1750 Johnson *Rambler* No. 19. §15 After a great part of life spent in enquiries which can never be resolved.

1830 J. F. W. Herschel *Prelim. Disc. Study Nat. Philos.* iii. i. 221 We are called upon to resolve the important but complicated problem.

1858 D. Boucicault *Pope of Rome* i. ii. 9 The business our friends are summoned hither to determine
will resolve the matter.

1941 Astounding Sci.-Fiction Feb. 115/2 Don't drive yourself crazy trying to resolve the paradoxes of time-travel.

1969 Times 15 Aug. 4/5 New studies designed to resolve how insulin works.

1980 J. CALDER RLS iii. 56 He reflected on the tricky problem of chastity, but could not resolve it.

2002 New Yorker 11 Nov. 78/3 Comedy theorists..have yet to resolve even such simple questions as where knock-knock jokes come from.

(b) With double object. Now rare.


1594 SHAKESPEARE Titus Andronicus v. iii. 35 Resolue me this, Was it well done..To slay his daughter.

1706 R. ESTCOURT Fair Example i. i, Pray will you resolve me one Question?

1707 T. BROWN Saints in Uproar in Wks. (1707) I. 109 Resolve me a Question or two.

1786 E. INCHBALD I'll tell you What iv. i. 65 If you can resolve me that..I have no censure for you.

1819 SCOTT Ivanhoe III. x. 233 And how should my poor valour succeed, Sir Jester, when thy light wit halts?—resolve me that.

1862 Church of People Jan. 10 Perhaps so,—but first resolve me the question in what does brutishness consist?

1905 H. C. BEECHING Let. 30 Sept. in E. V. Lucas Post-bag Diversions (1934) 13 Now resolve me a question.

1946 L. DE LA TORRE Dr. Sam: Johnson, Detector 190 ‘Pray, Dr. Johnson,’ said I, ‘resolve me one thing. If the strange message was not Ogam, what was it?’

‘b. To explain; to make clear. Obs.

c1592 Faire Em sig. B2, In frendship then resolue What is the cause of your vnlookt for stay?


a1661 T. FULLER Worthies (1662) Yorks. 206 Some resolve all his passion on a point of meer revenge.

1718 M. PRIOR Solomon on Vanity in Poems Several Occasions III. 838 The Man who would resolve the Work of Fate, May limit Number, and make Crooked Strait.

1821 WORDSWORTH Eccl. Sonn. 1. xxix. The full-orbed Moon..doth appear Silently to consume the heavy clouds; How no one can resolve.

1866 H. BUSHNELL Vicarious Sacrifice Introd. 14 Attempts have been made, in all ages..to assert what is called ‘the moral view’ of the atonement, and resolve it by the power it wields in human character.


c. Math. To solve (a mathematical problem, esp. an equation); to find a simpler form of (an equation) from which a solution can be readily inferred. Cf. RESOLUTION n.’ 14a(b).
1613 R. Witt (title) Arithmetical questions...briefly resolved.

1669 Philos. Trans. (Royal Soc.) 4 934 Dr Wallis, who hath so excellently resolved...Cubick Equations.


1737 tr. I. Newton Treat. Method of Fluxions 21, I then assume some Number for a and resolve this Equation.

1798 C. Hutton Course Math. I. 240 All equations, in which there are two terms involving the unknown quantity...are resolved like quadratics, by completing the square.

1850 C. Davies Logie & Utility Math. 266 Every geometrical question can be solved, if we can resolve the corresponding algebraic equation.

1874 J. Ficklin Compl. Algebra xiii. 240 Resolve the first member of the equation \( x^2 + 73x + 780 = 0 \) into two binomial factors. Ans. \((x + 60)(x + 13) = 0\).

1929 F. M. Saxelby Course Pract. Math. (ed. 8) vi. 68 No general rule can be given for resolving an expression into factors.

1970 Times 16 June p. vii/2 The optimum development of so many schemes depends upon resolving a simultaneous equation where the unknowns are design, cost and return.

2007 Desalination 209 302/1 We resolve the equation system by fixing parameters.

**d. To settle (a dispute or argument); to reconcile opposing elements or tendencies within (a conflict, contradiction, etc.).**

1875 Pall Mall Gaz. 7 Jan. 7/1 If, to resolve those conflicts, you should think it desirable...to arm the Executive Power with the right of appealing to the judgment of the country.

1901 Times 1 Feb. 3/6 He suggested that it be given to a tribunal to resolve the dispute which existed between Protestants and Roman Catholics.

1914 Philos. Rev. 23 353 Plotinus's effort...to resolve the conflict between these two elements in his view, Dr. Fuller finds to be wholly futile.

1972 M. Halperin Rise & Decline Fidel Castro xxv. 280 A special mode of communication that permitted the two parties to conduct and resolve the quarrel in public without acknowledging the existence of the quarrel.

1988 Engineer 17 Mar. 7/1 British Coal is expected to meet the South of Scotland Electricity Board to try to resolve the stand-off over cheap coal imports.

2005 Campaign 22 July 21/4 Since this spat is more damaging to you than to him, he may not be all that keen to resolve it.

**18. trans.**

**a. To remove, clear away, dispel (a doubt, uncertainty, or obscurity).**

1548 Hall's Vnion: Edward IV f. cxciv All suche doubtes, were now shortly resolued and determined, and all feare of his doynges, wer clerely put vnder and extinct.

1560 L. Digges Geom. Pract.: Pantometria (1571) i. xix. sig. F ij Small practize will resolue all doubts.

1616 Shakespeare Henry VI, Pt. 3 (1623) iv. 132 But ere I goe, Hastings and Mountague, Resolue my doubt.
1643  SIR T. BROWNE  Religio Medici (Authorized ed.) 48  Myself can shew a catalogue of Doubts which are not resolved at the first hearing.

1667  A. MARvell  Let. 2 Feb. in Poems & Lett. (1971) II. 54  If you find any thing perplex't in it I shall..resolve any scruple that you may haue of its exposition.

1706  J. VANBRUGH  Mistake II. i. 10  You must resolve one Doubt which often gives me great Disturbance.

1776  GIbbON  Decline & Fall I. xvii. 464  He was frequently requested to resolve the doubts of inferior judges.

1817  J. Mill  Hist. Brit. India II. iv. v. 165  All doubts might be resolved by the interrogation..of the commander.

1873  W. Black  Princess of Thule xiii. 198  She had bravely resolved her doubts and made up her mind.

1939  Chester (Pa.) Times 22 Mar. 3/4  Such grim statistics resolve any lingering doubt as to the effectiveness of Russia's military power.

1991  Times Educ. Suppl. 22 Feb. 38/3  The encyclopaedist aims to resolve uncertainty, not to enjoy its multiple creative possibilities.

2008  P. Masterson  Sense of Creation 110  Such observations..cannot be presumed to resolve the profoundly held misgivings of atheists about the existence..of God.

b. To dispel, allay, assuage (an emotion or feeling, as fear, curiosity, etc.).

1580  J. Lyly  Euphues & his Eng. in Euphues (new ed.) f. 18r,  Your reply hath fully resolved that feare.


1635  J. Reynolds  Triumphs Gods Revenge (new ed.) IV. xvii. 341  The patience of a little time, will shortly resolve our curiositie, whereunto these different affections will tend.

1723  J. Robe  Fatal Legacy v. 67  While yet I have remaining Life to hear thee, Resolve the Fears thy Words have rais'd within me.

1749  H. Fielding  Tom Jones III. vii. iii. 15  Indeed we cannot resolve his Curiosity as to this Point.

1833  W. J. Neale  Port Admiral III. xii. 243  She..ascended to the top of Maker Tower, anxious yet dreading to descry the approach of some vessel, which would resolve her fears.

1958  J. Betjeman  Coll. Poems 278  The waltz was played, the songs were sung, The night resolved our fears.

†19. trans. (refl.). To join oneself to a person's opinion. Obs. rare 

1548  Hall's Vnion: Henry VI f. clxxix.,  Therle of Salisbury and other his frendes, seing his corage, resolved themselfes to his opinion.

†20. trans.

a. To free (a person) from doubt or perplexity; to bring to a clear understanding; to provide with definite information. Obs.

In quot. 1548  with the senses as object.

1548  E. Gest  Treat. againste Masse sig. Biv,  The broken bread and blessed wyne be institute
purposely to resolve and ascertain our senses.

1549 J. PONET Def. Mariage Priestes sig. Dviii, I haue wyshed that som learned man wold take the paynes to resolve the vnlearned sorte touchyng that poynt.

1596 W. LAMBARDE Perambulation of Kent (rev. ed.) 399 If you yet doubt, conferre (I pray you) his report with theirs, and it shall resolue you.

1616 SHAKESPEARE Measure for Measure (1623) IV. ii. 208 Yet you are amaz'd, but this shall absolutely resolue you.

1649 BP. J. TAYLOR Great Exemplar II. 98 To strengthen the weake, to resolue the scrupulous, to teach the ignorant.

1719 D. DEFOE Life Robinson Crusoe 356 We knew not what Course to take, but the Creatures resolv'd us soon.

1766 A. WILLIAMS tr. P. Metastasio Uninhabited Island vi, in Misc. 161 Whate'er it be, it has a pleasing form: My Sister shall resolue me.

1772 J. WESLEY Jrnl. 31 Oct., They asked me, 'whether they were good or bad spirits?' But I could not resolue them.

b. With of or in and complement expressing the matter of doubt. Obs.

1549 J. PONET tr. B. Ochino Tragoedie Unjuste Usurped Primacie sig. f.iii, I am also resolued nowe in another doubt, whereof I shoulde neuer haue ben answered yf ye had not made me perceyue it.

1549 J. PONET tr. B. Ochino Tragoedie Unjuste Usurped Primacie sig. y.ii, We haue sent for you...to resolue vs of a dout, that is come to our minde.

1567 Reg. Privy Council Scotl. I. 515 That thai being certifiit of the veritie may be resolvit of all doubt.

1573 H. CHEKE tr. F. Negri Freewyl II. ii. 75, I haue ben desirous of long tyme to know it, and I could neuer meete with any whiche was able to resolue me in this poynt.

1597 T. MORLEY Plaine & Easie Introd. Musicke 4 If you remember that which before you tolde mee you vnderstood: you would resolue your selfe of that doubt.

1648 T. GAGE Eng.-Amer. 6 To resolve the Pope himself of whatsoever difficult points in Divinity may be questioned.

1651 N. CULPEPER Semeiotica Uranica sig. B3, I know you would be resolved in one particular.

1742 T. STORY Jrnl. of Life (1747) 212 Not knowing how we might afterwards be engaged, we did not resolue him in that Point.

1767 'CORIAT JUNIOR' Another Traveller! II. 23 You may ask whatever questions you please, and you shall be resolued of everything within my power.

c. With indirect question as complement. Obs. (in later use passing into sense 23b).

1565 J. JEWEL Replie Hardinges Answeare i. 18 Concerning Consecration, he doth greate wronge to charge vs with ye breache thereof, before he him selfe and others of his side be better resolued wherein standeth Consecration.

1595 SHAKESPEARE Henry VI, Pt. 3 II. i. 9, I cannot ioy vntil I be resolu'de, Where our right valiant father is become.

1648 LD. HERBERT Life Henry VIII (1649) 520 He sent to Spain to be resolued...which of the two
Marriages were most convenient.

1690 J. Locke Two Treat. Govt. i. xi. §147 It will always remain a Doubt. till our A. resolves us, whether Shem..had right to Govern.

1720 D. Defoe Capt. Singleton 273 Whether we..may come off any better..I cannot resolve thee.

1756 G. Washington Let. in Writings (1889) I. 253, I wish your Honor would resolve me, whether the militia..must be supplied out of the public stocks of provisions.

†21. trans.

a. To come to a conclusion about, settle in one's mind, be sure of. Also with clause or infinitive as object. Obs.

c1565 ‘T. C.’ tr. Boccaccio Galesus Cymon & Iphigenia sig. Avi’, Her Heere, like goulden wyre, he painted forth with praise, And fully was resoluted in minde, they shonner as Phebvs rayes.

a1618 W. Raleigh Remains (1644) 237 He left me so weak that he resolved not to find me alive.

1659 T. Burton Diary (1828) IV. 55, I was some days since to seek what to resolve in this great debate.

1702 J. Logan in Mem. Hist. Soc. Pennsylvania (1870) IX. 122 Having solicitously resolved several things in my thoughts relating to it, I endeavoured to stave them off.

b. With object complement: to be certain that (a person or thing) is what is specified; (also) to show conclusively to be of a certain character. Obs. rare.

1613 J. Stephens Cinthias Reuenge v. vi. sig. R’, I (Madam) will remoue the deere suspence Of question..And so resolue you a whore absolute.

1616 B. Jonson Epiceane iv. v, in Wks. I. 579 But he looses no reputation with vs, for we all resolu’d him an asse before.

1625 R. Montagu Appello Cesarem 2 All things..so Delivered..are Errors actull in themselves; and so stand resolved and accounted of in the Doctrine of the Church.

c. To fix upon (a person) for a particular purpose. Obs. rare +1.

1710 D. Manley Mem. Europe I. III. 358 She had..resolved him for her peculiar Pleasures, tho' she knew not what way to compass what she had resolved.

†22.

a. trans. Chiefly with of or that. To convince or assure (a person) that something is the case. Obs.

1567 G. Fenton tr. M. Bandello Certaine Tragicall Disc. i. f. 13, Being at larg resoluted of that which you haue hard by specill reporte [he] went imediatlye to his chamber [Fr. Ayant ouy ceste histoire; It. Anselmo hebbe inteso il periglio ove Carlo si trouaua].

1567 T. Stapleton Counterblast f. 473, M. Horn..goeth roundlye to the matter, and resolueth vs, that
this Decree was made not by the Apostles only.  

1590  E. WEBBE Rare & Wonderfull Things To Rdr., They doubtles will resolue them that it is true which is here expressed.

a1604  M. HANMER Chron. Ireland 159 in J. Ware Two Hist. Ireland (1633) , This Lacy behaved himselfe so discreetly...that the King was resolved of his truth and fidelity.

a1616  SHAKESPEARE Henry VI, Pt. 1 (1623) III. viii. 20  Long since we were resolued of your truth.

1642  D. ROGERS Naaman 830  It is said of Hanna, that ere Eli had resolved her from God of a sonne, shee was full of trouble.

1650  R. STAPYLTON tr. F. Strada De Bello Belgico VIII. 30  And, when they resolved him no danger should accrue to either [etc.].

1726  W. R. CHETWOOD Voy. Capt. Boyle 258  The Colonel resolv'd me that he had the Means in his own Hands to pacify him.

1736  H. FIELDING Tumble-down Dick Argt. sig. Aiv,  She advises him to go to the Round-House,.and there be resolved from his own Mouth of the Truth of his Sire.

b. trans. (refl.). To assure, satisfy, or convince oneself in regard to something. Also: to be assured, know with certainty (freq. in imper.). Obs.

1567  W. PAINTER Palace of Pleasure II. xxv. f. 223  Rhomeo, thou must fully resolue thy selfe vpon one of these .ij. points.

1585  T. BILSON True Difference Christian Subiection I. 139  You shall thereby resolue your selfe howe farre Princes then lawfully might, and carefully did medle with guiding and ruling the Church of God.


1593  T. LODGE Life & Death William Long Beard C 3  In youth be true, and then in age resolve thee, Friends will be friends.

a1618  W. RALEIGH Remains (1644) 237  If I live to return, resolve your self that it is the care for you that hath strengthened my heart.

1657  S. PURCHAS Theatre Flying-insects 74  If you taste it, you will easily resolve your self.

1692  G. DANIEL Voy. World Cartesius I. 39  Settle and compose your self, for you seem a little disturb'd: And resolve your self you need not fear, and that you shall receive no harm.

1707  D. MANLEY Almyna I. i. 9  Soon resolve your self, he is a Lover, But with that Duty, to his Royal Brother, As without his permission, not to hope.

1710  LD. SHAFTESBURY Characteristicks (1737) II. ii. iii. 276  We apprehend a larger Scheme, and easily resolve our-selves why Things were not compleated in this State.

1814  H. F. CARY tr. Dante Paradiso XXVIII. 7  [As one who] turneth to resolve him, if the glass Have told him true.

1830  E. BULWER-LEYTON Paul Clifford II. i. 32  Could he do so? Umph! No, I have resolved myself, that is impossible.

1869  E. M. GOULBURN Pursuit Holiness vi. 48  He must resolve himself on the question.

c. intr. To be satisfied, certain, or convinced. Obs.
The Gourner by the counsell of those that had perswaded him too surrender, resolued upon so smal an assurance of the Bascha. [Fr. resolut soubs tant peu asseureée parolle du Bascha].

Bob. For do you see sir,...I would not extend thus farre. Mat. O Lord sir I resolve so.

Resolue on this, thou shalt be fortunate, If thou receiue me for thy Warlike Mate.

I have allwayes, since I knew any thing of thee, resolved of the truth of it.

†23. trans.

a. To inform or tell (a person) of something. Obs.

It is thocht convenient to resolve all personis of the same, that nane heireftir sall pretend occasioun of ignorance.

These letters will resolue him of my minde.

He went back, resoluing them of my stiffe denyall.

Colonell Massie tooke courage to resolve them of the incapacitie of that service for the present.

We desir to be resolvit quhether ye haife sufficient authoritie to pronounce giltie or not giltie.

Are ye (my Lord) the king of Thessalie, for whom my hart hath suffered exceeding greefe? I praie ye resolue me presentlie.

The wound I warrant ye is deepe my Lord, Search Surgeon and resolue me what thou seest.

Pray you, resolue me, why you giue that heauenly praise, to this earthly Banquet?

I pray thee, if thou canst, resolue me. Whether is the heriot payd [etc.]?

The wound I warrant ye is deepe my Lord, Search Surgeon and resolue me what thou seest.

Pray you, resolue me, why you giue that heauenly praise, to this earthly Banquet?

I pray thee, if thou canst, resolue me. Whether is the heriot payd [etc.]?

Resolve me, Strangers, whence, and what you are.

Who was your Father? Come, resolve me immediately.

Can Sense this Paradox endure? Resolve me, Cambray, or Fontaine.

Go! Yet stay—resolve me, hast thou weigh'd the danger?

But first—resolve me!—saidst thou thou hadst prayed, And vainly to thy Zöphiel's silent shade?
c. To answer (a person); to reply to. *Obs.*

1860 A. C. SWINBURNE *Queen-mother* III. iii. 91 *Cino.* Are you yet satisfied? *Ca.* This is dead ware...

1586 G. PETTIE & B. YONG tr. S. Guazzo *Ciùle Conuersat.* (rev. ed.) IV. f. 219, I resolue thee (faire Ladie) thus [Fr. *Vous deuez sçavoir que*; It. *Io ui faccio sapere, che*], that many times I tried [etc.].

1632 J. VICARS tr. Virgil *XII Aeneids* v. 144 Then aged Nautes..Resolves him thus; [etc.].

†24.

a. *trans.* To advise (a person) to do something. Also with subordinate clause: to give advice to (a person) regarding something. *Obs.*

1579 G. FENTON tr. F. Guicciardini *Hist. Guicciardini* x. 577 He..was nowe resolued [Fr. *resolu*] by discreetee councell..to spare no liberalities nor offers of money to reduce them to his amitie.

1648 LD. HERBERT *Life Henry VIII* (1649) 395* He was resolv'd by his Counsel rather to weary and famish the Emperors Army.

1656 T. BURTON *Diary* (1828) I. 32, I would have the Committee to resolve you how you will proceed.

b. *intr.* To consult, take counsel. *Obs.*

1591 SPENSER *Prosopopoia in Complaints* 123 It behoves, ere that into the race We enter, to resolve first hereupon.

1629 W. HINDE *Faithfull Remonstr.* (1641) xviii. 56 He made them sometimes as his counsellours, to advise, conferre, consult, and resolve with them, in matters of conscience.

1719 D. DEFOE *Life Robinson Crusoe* 303 Let us retreat out of their View or Hearing, least they awake, and we will resolve further.

25. *trans.* With clause as object: to decide or establish conclusively; to conclude. Also in pass. with *it* as subject.

1586 EARL OF LEICESTER *Corr.* (1844) 401 The surgion doth fully resolue..he is without danger for this blowe.

1621 M. WROTH *Countesse of Mountgomeries Urania* 40 They all beheld this place with great wonder, Parselius resoluing it was some Enchauntment.

1642 J. MARCH *Argument Militia* 18 It is resolved by the Judges..that the King may well hold his Parliament..without the Spirituall Lords.

1729 J. ROGERS 19 *Serm.* (1735) iii. 49 This Happiness, it was presently resolved by all.., must be some one uniform End..attainable by every Man.

1735 *Lives Most Remarkable Criminals* I. 354, I..could not resolve..whether these humorous gentlemen..were to be ranked under the Denomination of Knights Errants, or plain robbery.

1818 W. CRUISE *Digest Laws Eng. Real Prop.* (ed. 2) II. 309 It was resolved, that the remainder
limited to B. was good.

1842 COLE Westm. Abbey 107 Whether or not they [sc. mandates] were executed, our antiquaries have not yet resolved.

1883 W. BLACK Shandon Bells I. iii. 76 He resolved that it was now too late for doubt.

1916 Outlook (N.Y.) 5 July 552/1 The plain people of Mexico resolved that there was nothing divine about the order which fattened the few at the cost of the many.

1969 Eng. Hist. Rev. 84 504 They [sc. the House of Lords] resolved that there had been a plot.

2003 R. A. GABRIEL Mil. Hist. Anc. Israel iii. 63 Although the habiru were an important factor in Egyptian and Israelite history, further research has not completely resolved that they were not the Hebrews.

IV. To determine or fix upon a course of action.

26. a. trans. To determine or decide upon (a course of action, something to be achieved or brought about, etc.); to make (something) one's firm intention.

(a) With simple object, or (more commonly) with clause as object (usually preceded by that).

1523 KING HENRY VIII in J. O. Halliwell Lett. Kings Eng. (1846) I. 284 We..have resolved and determined that..ye shall then have our letters of discharge.

1594 SHAKESPEARE Titus Andronicus II. i. 106 So must you resolue, That..You must perforce accomplish as you may.

1616 B. JONSON Epicœne III. iii, in Wks. I. 557 It shall be done, that's resolu'd.

1632 J. HAYWARD tr. G. F. Biondi Eromena 21 They resolved that the Admirall should goe disguised..to assure himselfe of the fact.

1667 MILTON Paradise Lost IX. 830 Confirm'd then I resolve, Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe.

1759 W. ROBERTSON Hist. Scotl. (1761) (ed. 4) II. VII. 151 Elizabeth resolved that no circumstance of pomp or solemnity should be wanting.

1781 GIBBON Decline & Fall III. xxix. 125 As soon as they had resolved his death, they condescended to flatter his pride.

1819 SHELLEY Cenci III. i. 42 All must be suddenly resolved and done.

1842 R. I. WILBERFORCE Rutilius & Lucius 265 He had seen enough of the Christians to resolve that nothing should induce him to stain his hands with their blood.

1870 J. J. MCCLOSKEY Across Continent IV, in America's Lost Plays (1940) IV. 105, I resolved I would lead such a life no longer, and I became a gambler.

1952 T. ARMSTRONG Adam Brunskill ix. 305 She sternly resolved that, if she really were to be a support to her uncle, she must take herself in hand.

1996 J. LANCHESTER Debt to Pleasure (1997) 4, I resolved that I would jot down my thoughts on the subject of food as I went.

(b) With infinitive as object. Also refl., with infinitive complement, in same sense.
b. *intr.*, and *trans.* (*refl.*). To come to a firm decision in regard to future action or intention; to determine to do something.

(a) With *on* or *upon*; formerly also †*of*, †*in*.

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**resolve, v.** : Oxford English Dictionary

http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/163733?rskey=gqkzxl&result=2#eid
†(b) Without construction. Obs.

a1528 in J. Strype Eccl. Memorials (1721) I. App. 62, I desired his Ho[liness] to resolve hymself without delay or difficultie.
1581 P. WIBURN Checke or Reproofe M. Howlets Shreeching f. 59, Hee resolueth generally euen like himselfe, and for fornication particularly.
1590 J. SMYTHE Certain Disc. Weapons Ded. 8 To know, how of himselfe..with valour to resolue and performe.
1597 BACON Of Coulers Good & Euill in Ess. (1871) 143 As he sayth well, Not to resolue, is to resolue, and many times it..ingageth as farre in some other sort as to resolue.
1667 MILTON Paradise Lost IX. 97 Thus he resolv'd, but first..His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd.
1748 J. THOMSON Castle of Indolence II. lxii, Resolve! resolve! and to be men aspire!
1762 O. GOLDSMITH Citizen of World I. 107 So after resolving, and re-resolving, I had courage enough to tell her my mind.
1859 J. AUSTIN Lect. Jurispr. (1879) I. xxi. 452 When such expressions as ‘resolving’ and ‘determining’ are applied to a present intention to do a future act.

c. trans. to resolve with oneself: = sense 26a. Now rare.

1578 G. BEST True Disc. Passage to Cathaya 1. 45 He determined and resolued wth himselfe, to go make full prooffe thereof.
1588 J. UDALL True Remedie v. 86, The prophet..resolueth with himselfe, that though they regard not their owne good, yet will hee continue his care ouer them.
1624 E. BOLTON Nero Caesar 140 It must necessarily precede, that he resolued with himselfe, not to issue out to fight with Boadicia.
1710 LD. SHAFTESBURY Advice to Author in Characteristicks (1737) I. i. 153, I have resolv'd with myself, that the maxim might be admitted.
1743 H. FIELDING Jonathan Wild III. ii, in Misc. III. 196 Am I so absolutely their Master, that I can resolve with myself, so far only will I grieve?
1823  J. GALT  Ringan Gilhaize I. 122  My grandfather resolved with himself to depart betimes for Kilmarnock, in case of any change in his temper.

1859  H. B. STOWE  Minister's Wooing xvii. 277  He had inly resolved with himself that he would give Candace his opinion.

1908  E. PHILLPOTTS  Mother 396  Seriously he resolved with himself to destroy Northmore.

†d. intr. To decide to set one's course for a place, destination, etc. Also (occas.) trans. (refl.) in same sense. Obs.


1600  SHAKESPEARE  Henry IV, Pt. 2 11. iii. 67,  I will resolue for Scotland.

a1625  J. FLETCHER  Noble Gentleman iv. iv, in F. Beaumont & J. Fletcher  Comedies & Trag.  (1647) sig. Ff/1,  Tell me, have you resolv'd your selfe for Court?

a1643  W. CARTWRIGHT  Ordinary  (1651) V. v. 88  Let's swear Fidelity to one another, and So resolve for New England.

1700  'AN APOTHECARY'  Devil's Journey to London 9  This mighty Prince..Resolves for London now what ere betide.

1740  tr. C. Rollin  Anc. Hist.  (ed. 2) VII. 261  He resolved for Sicily, which would open him a passage into Africa.

1760  Impostors Detected II. iv. iii. 189  We were obliged to separate, and every one take his chance... As for me I resolved for Lisbon.

E. trans. Of an event or circumstance: to make (a person) resolved or determined to do something. Also with on.

1814  J. H. MERIVALE  Orlando in Roncesvalles 111. 66  Smarting Pride contended with his fear, And half resolved him to abide the tempest hurrying near.

1836  R. BROWNING & J. FORSTER  Life Strafford  (1892) 15  The events of the interim had resolved the leaders of the house on abandoning the terms proposed.

1890  Sir C. RUSSELL  in Daily News 24 July 2/7  The knowledge of this marriage resolved Lord and Lady C...to send their son abroad.

a1902  S. BUTLER  Way of All Flesh  (1903) lxvii. 300  It was this that resolved him to part once and for all with his parents.

1933  A. BRYANT  S. Pepys  (1934) iv. 80  He received such unmistakable signs of the spirit of the people as resolved him to wait no longer.

2005  A. J. HACKIKYAN et al.  Heritage Armenian Lit. 875  This episode resolved him to learn his native tongue.

27. trans.

A. Esp. of a deliberative body or meeting: to determine formally as a resolution (resolution n. 1 15a); to adopt or pass as a resolution.

Usu. with that-clause as object; freq. in pass. with it as subject (also with ellipsis of it and the auxiliary verb to be).
1563 Orig. Jrnls. House of Commons 21 Jan. 1 f. 219, Yt is resolved that Mr Speaker shall direct his letter in the name of the house to come and [etc.].

1590 Articles against Cartwright in T. Fuller Church-hist. Brit. (1655) IX. 201 At some of such meetings..it was resolved..that such..conferences in several Shires should be erected.

1604 Orig. Jrnls. House of Commons 26 June 3 f. 325, Resolved vpon further motion, that Mr. Speaker..should present thanks to his ma[tie].

1641 in E. Nicholas Nicholas Papers (1886) I. 10 It was resolved that there shalbe on ye 7th of September next a publique thanksgiving for this good accord betweene ye 2 nacions.

1706 in Acts & Resolves Mass. Bay (1895) VIII. 721 Resolved That the sum of three hundred & fifty Pounds, be allowed..to Mr Thomas Oakes the memorialist.

1781 G. Cockings Amer. War v. 124 They [sc. Congress] resolved, 'That the embarkation of Lieutenant-general Burgoyne, and the army under his command, be suspended till [etc.]'.

1806 Med. & Physical Jrnl. 15 253 Resolved unanimously, that this meeting..entertains the most firm conviction that [etc.].

1835 Baptist Mag. July 282/1 The following Resolutions were resolved unanimously.

1849 T. B. Macaulay Hist. Eng. I. ii. 175 The Commons began by resolving that every member should, on pain of expulsion, take the sacrament [etc.].

1905 S. Dill Roman Society (ed. 2) II. iii. 275 The meeting..formally resolved that the honourable Julianus should be requested to accept the distinction.

1970 Music Educators Jrln. 56 85/2 Therefore, be it resolved that we..do nominate John Philip Sousa to the Hall of Fame for Great Americans.

1995 Methodist Recorder 3 Aug. 3/3 A special meeting..resolved that one of its five ministerial appointments..be devoted exclusively to outreach among young people in the circuit.

†b. To put (a person) out of a condition by passing a resolution. Obs. rare.

1798 I. Allen Nat. & Polit. Hist. Vermont 237 The inhabitants of Vermont had lived in a state of independence.., and could not now submit to be resolved out of it.